

# SOME ASPECTS OF THE MIND OF FRANCE<sup>1</sup>

## I

### THE UNITY OF FRANCE

ONE of the most pregnant processes in the history of mankind is taking place on this side of the Atlantic. A great nation is reaching a clearer consciousness of itself; under the stress of war, it is feeling its new-born unity of purpose. This is not the least important happening of a time when every day brings a world-stirring event. And that higher degree of cohesion is accomplished in spite of the prodigious diversity of the elements which constitute your national being. The land, in its continent breadth, offers every variety of aspect, climate, and natural influences; East, Middle West, West and South might belong to different spheres, and each form a full-sized empire in itself. The people hail from all the corners of the earth; the main Anglo-Saxon or Celtic stock has been enriched with specimens of all the races, whom the rising splendor of the new world, and your hospitable freedom, drew toward you. The well-worn image of the melting-pot forces itself upon the onlooker, and I must apologize for once more hinting at it. What will be the outcome of the huge simmering and stirring? How long will it take to coalesce into a limpid concoction? Are not the ingredients too heterogeneous? Born

<sup>1</sup> Three lectures, of which the first was delivered at the Rice Institute, December 9, 1918, on the occasion of the visit of the Official French Mission.

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with your single-hearted entrance into the war, will your present single-mindedness survive the war? Was ever a sound, harmonious collective personality evolved from so many different materials? Did the world, and the history of man, ever see anything like it?

This pretty general direction of men's thoughts over here may justify me in my perhaps ambitious choice of a subject. In dealing with "The Unity of France," I know I am making the usual appeal to your generous sympathies, so eager to take an interest in all that concerns my country. But I should be happy if such a study, in the modest plane in which I feel entitled to attempt it, could possess for you an additional value; if it could have a bearing, however indirect, on the great problem of your moral destiny. I need not remind you of the unique character of every personality, be it that of an individual or of a people. Besides so many glaring differences of time, place, constituent elements, the history of France can hardly, in any respect, afford a precedent for the development of the United States; there are no precedents, strictly speaking, in the evolution of mankind. But an analogy, even in such matters, may not be entirely misleading or futile. If it proves so vague and distant that it remains purely formal, yet it will not be destitute of significance. I hope you will find some measure of plausibility in the possible application of my words to your own country, if I do not wholly fail to show you, as I am going to try, that the elements France is made of were quite as diverse as those which go to the making of this nation; that France might have been called, in her time, the melting-pot of Europe; and that her undisputed unity—in the psychological sense, the sense I am concerned with—is chiefly the result of a moral growth. Being due, as it were, to a victory of mind over matter, it encourages the spiritual hopes which find their

cause and their occasion in all the nobler efforts of human consciousness; and among such efforts there is none higher, I believe, than the longing of a people, as we see here, for its full oneness—the groping of a collective being for a sure grasp of its soul.

I am well aware that the strength of the analogy, and the point of the comparison, are somewhat lamed by this obvious remark, that what is true of France must apply, more or less, to all historical nationalities. They have all grown, and their growth has called into play the full moral and intellectual activities of the human units or groups they were made of; while the process, being a gradual one, has necessarily consisted in the reduction of heterogeneous matter to organic unity. Indeed, the parallel would be almost as illuminating, if we sought for its other term in any of the nations of the world; and the more illuminating, as each nation had a longer, deeper past, and looked back through a richer experience.

But I think I am justified in saying that among the older countries and the more ancient peoples, that character of unity belongs to France in a special degree. Is it not a fact that she reached her full personality earlier than the other nations of modern Europe? Does not her very name call up a distinct, individual image? The symbol of the people is a person, and a woman; there has never been a doubt about that. The figure of the land itself, one often hears, is compact and well-defined. And whoever has visited France, and formed an impression of the land and the people, will agree that their most marked characteristic is unity in variety. There lingers in the mind of the visitor a subtle quality of the landscape, an aspect of the sky and the earth, a mixture of order and proportion with the free charm of picturesqueness, which one associates with the French soil as

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with hardly any other land; and from the diversity of tones and faces and gestures and mental or moral ways, there emerges a truly national attitude of the mind, a complex of traits and tendencies which constitutes a particular type. Its outline may be somewhat shifting and blurred; the innumerable exceptions and qualifications may soften the contours with a kind of dim atmosphere, but the picture, as a whole, stands there before our imagination; or the general impression reveals itself in a flash to our sensibilities. We have an idea of the Frenchness of the French; and that notion is perhaps a clearer one than any we may form, for instance, of the Britishness of the British, if we throw in, as of course we must, the Scotch and the Welsh, leaving out the Irish; and I will go the length of saying that, even to our present mood, which does not care for nicer distinctions and shades, the Germanhood of the Germans is not so unmistakable, as soon as we combine with the Germany that is the Germany that was, and that which will, some day, be raised from the dead.

There is a family likeness among Frenchmen; there is a connecting link between them, and more than that, a unifying strand, woven into their very natures. And in their hearts of hearts they know it, and have always been conscious of it—in spite of their obstinate individualism. Freedom in France too often is conceived as the right to do as one likes; and the national birthright of the French is apt to be considered as full permission to have a fling at the opinion of the majority. But this does not make them a whit less essentially alike, or less aware of their subconscious identity. What does that subtle, all-pervading chain of unity consist of? I shall try to grasp some of its elusive links. For the present, let us be content with the fact: there does exist in France, in spite of strong individualistic tendencies, a virtual

similarity of tastes and purpose. How deep it goes, the great drama of these times has made clear. The "union sacrée," the unity of a people welded into a solid whole by the desperate energy of a supreme resolve, has been the salvation of France. It was perfect at once, from the first day. The quarrels of peace vanished in the shudder of an hour. A tender, intimate bond was born—was it born, or only revealed? North and South, East and West, who cared? The brothers had come together, and instinctively fallen into their places—side by side. The unity they knew, they obeyed, had nothing external, was in no way superimposed; it welled up from their innermost beings. Germany, at the same moment, was showing a somewhat analogous unanimity; but who will say what military and social discipline had to do with it?

And yet, the unity of France is built on extraordinarily mixed foundations. As soon as one looks closely at the matter, one finds that the popular, traditional outline of her identity and history is misleading. Nothing is simple in the origins of France. The elements she is made of are the most varied in Europe. Neither the land, nor the people, was one spontaneously, naturally, with the mechanical certainty of physical facts. Let German scholarship glory, if it likes, in the two-thirds fictitious purity, and unadulterated singleness, of the German race. We Frenchmen shall find it a very easy submission to the rights of truth, to proclaim that indeed we are, or originally were, a coming together of the families of man; and that human, moral influences, rather than nature, created the national bond between us.

Take the land, first. I said it possessed the figure of unity. And so it does, when once we are used to look at it as a political unit. But the geologist sees things in a different light. Under his gaze, the well-proportioned, almost artis-

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tic definiteness of the body of France vanishes; there remains but a portion of a continuous whole, the projection westward and southward of central Europe. No doubt, in that elongated end of the powerful mass which runs without a break from Japan to Portugal, the position of France has its distinctive qualities and features; it stands at the point where the isthmus between the northern and southern seas is at its narrowest; it is deeply indented by their fruitless attempt to join, before the thrusting head of Spain forces them back for the last time; and it plays the part of a connecting link both in sea and land communications. Moreover, it presents a balanced equilibrium of flat and uneven surfaces; and the network of streams and natural openings for roads facilitates commercial traffic and the contacts of contiguous or more distant groups. But from a geographical point of view, it is variety which gives France its predominant character; and a variety which often assumes the full force of contrasts. In its general structure, the country belongs to two different worlds—that of the primitive uplands of central Europe, with its sinkings and concentric depressions; and on the other hand, that of the relatively modern, powerful eruptive ridges of the south—the Alps, the Pyrenees. In the first stages of her economic and cultural development, France was part and parcel of two conflicting civilizations: the Mediterranean domain, to which she was related more narrowly and intimately during the initial period of her growth; and the northern culture, with which as time went on she held a fuller intercourse. The shock which your Westerner feels when he awakes in New England, or your man from Boston when he finds himself under the languid sky of New Orleans, is no stronger than the tumult of sensations experienced by the Frenchman who, born and bred in Calais or Dunkerque, is rushed to Perpignan or Nice. Within a

short span of the earth, France contains more forcible oppositions than any other country in Europe. There was no irresistible suggestion in the physical basis which supports her for the particular unity she has built upon it. One can conceive a separate political organization having risen on the French shore of the Mediterranean; one could fancy the France of the north and east having coalesced into a common life with western Germany, for instance, or the south of England. That was not to be; and we can, after the event, see many good reasons why it could not be. But such certainty, I am afraid, is a dogmatic illusion.

Take next, the human materials. People will say with equal confidence—sometimes they will say in the same breath—that the French belong to the Latin races; that of course they are of Celtic origin, being the descendants of the Gauls; and that, no less obviously, their ancestors were the Frankish, Germanic invaders who gave them their name. What view does recent research take of those origins?

It sees in the composite stock of France the result of an infinite number of crossings. Let us disentangle the main successive strands of that complex national web. First of all, there were the mysterious, primeval tribes which erected the menhirs and cromlechs; they have melted into the following layers of civilization without leaving even a name; but the vestiges of their puzzling activities are to be found, as you know, all over the greater part of France; and they probably contributed one of its most essential strata to the present stock.

Next, we have the “Ibères” (Iberi), who occupied the France of the southwest, or rather, held that region in greater density. They stretched southward over the Pyrenees to Spain; and that isolated people, the Basques, whose history long remained a riddle, may be traced back to them.

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Then we find the "Ligures" (Ligurs or Ligurians), who seem to have succeeded the "Ibères" in most of the lands that were to become France, and were particularly concentrated in the southeast, in what is to-day Provence; these last two, the Iberes and the Ligures, begin to emerge through the darkness of prehistoric times; we catch, at least, a glimmer of their definite existence.

We know a very little more of the Phœnicians from Tyre, who settled in a good many places along the shores of the Mediterranean, and traded inland as well as over the seas. They had some of their harbors and markets in the country of the Ibères and Ligures.

We know much more, again, of the Greeks from Phocée, in the East, who founded Marseilles, and made it a flourishing colony. And in this case, if not in that of the Phœnicians, the admixture of blood was substantial and permanent; Marseilles grew to be the centre of a state, a little world in itself, before being merged into the beginnings of French nationality.

Then we reach the Celts, and, as you see, they had many predecessors, they came from the part of Europe which was subsequently taken over by the Germans. The Celts had certainly a good deal to do with the formation of the modern French temperament; some of our moral and mental traits, as the observers of to-day describe them, were first noticed and defined by the ancient writers who were interested in the Gauls. They were a mercurial race, and scattered themselves in dare-devil expeditions over Europe. They covered practically the whole of France; but their many tribes and clans ran through the preëxisting populations without exterminating them. On the contrary, the tendency is at present to consider that the Gauls were an aristocracy, ruling over subjected races, and, as often hap-



pens, assimilated by them to a large extent. There were wide differences among themselves. Still, as you know, it is they who first gave a common name, if not exactly a personality as a nation, to the country from the Pyrenees to the Rhine, as early as the second century before Christ.

A separate mention should be made of the Belgians, who are sometimes confused with the Gauls by ancient writers; they were akin to them, and held, besides present-day Belgium, all the northeast of France.

And now, not least, but not last either, the Roman conquerors confront us. Incessantly warring against one another, the Gauls failed to achieve political unity, though they once or twice came very near doing it. Their stubborn individualism opened the way to the invaders from Italy. I cannot of course do more than hint at that crucial chapter in the history of the making of France; my purpose is not to sum up that history, but briefly to emphasize one of its aspects: the multiplicity of the waves of men which broke over the land and fertilized it. With the Latin soldiers who settled as colonists in the most pleasant districts, the genius of a highly civilized people was implanted on the soil of France. They added their blood to the elements of the coming race; but they were not very numerous, and it is their language and laws, their administrative, organizing instincts, the culture they brought with them, which most deeply stamped the still pliant materials they forced themselves upon. The rhetoric of Rome made orators of the gifted talkers of the Gallic tribes. Popular Latin, universally adopted, was gradually corrupted into Old French, one of the Romance languages; and it looked as if the seeds of the silently preparing nationality were complete.

We know that they were not, since it took more invasions, the rush of the Barbarians over the decaying Roman empire,

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the coming of the Franks, their settlements and struggles, to bring about the general conditions in which the new world of the middle ages superseded the civilization of Rome. How France grew out of the chaos of the Germanic domination, and slowly another order arose, in which the principle of unity and law which the Gauls had inherited from the Romans conquered in its turn the anarchic instincts of the feudal lords, is a very complicated story, the main lines of which are pretty generally known. Let us only remember that the Franks did not destroy the populations they subjected, so that gradually the preëxisting stock reasserted itself; and the France of the tenth or eleventh centuries crystallized out of a mixture of strains, among which the latest invaders played only a restricted, if a politically predominant part.

Many more immigrants, after that time, added new blood to what was beginning to be a nationality; and principally the "Northmen" or Scandinavians, who harried the whole realm, but settled in Normandy. As for the Saracens or Moors in the south; the English, who in the course of endless wars occupied some provinces for long periods; the Jews, not a few of them; the Spaniards and Italians and Swiss and Germans, they threw in a spicing and seasoning, the more freely as their own countries were not, generally speaking, brought to a conscious state so early as France. Special mention must be made of the Alsatians, who from the seventeenth century indissolubly attached themselves to the common fatherland.

Nor did those various elements lose themselves entirely in the mass of the growing nation. Their identity may be, as a general rule, hardly traceable; still there lingers in a good many places a distinct flavor of the primitively prevailing stock. It is not possible to believe that any part of France

shows us to-day the unmixed descendants of any of the constituent races. Everywhere, the blood has been repeatedly crossed and recrossed. But when all is said, the French provincial types bear some relation to the nature of the people that colonized the district in greatest number, or managed to make their hold upon it most enduring. Influences of all kinds—geographical and climatic, economic, social, political—have added a new complexity to the shifting and obscure network of those racial differences. As a result of a prolonged evolution, we have to-day the broad lines of opposition between our main territorial types; and each of them, of course, has its local varieties as well. Behind the abstract image of the quintessential Frenchman, therefore, we should call up the concrete figures of the thick-set, sturdy, blue-eyed, silent, dreamy, mystic sailor from Brittany; the flaxen-haired, tall, hard-working, jolly weaver from Flanders; the wine-grower from Burgundy, ready of tongue and eloquent of speech; the southerner of Provence, dark-haired, bronze-skinned, indolent, quick-witted, with a flash in his dark eyes; the charcoal-burner of Auvergne, round-headed, hairy, stubborn, shy, with a look of the primeval cave-dweller about him; the keen-eyed peasant of Béarn or Gascony, well-knit, nimble and sly; the heavier, slow, strong, garrulous native of Bordeaux. On such a background of rich provincial traits the essential town-dweller, the born Parisian, with his thin intellectual face, his spare frame, the sharp critical play of his ironical mind, stands out in strong relief. And he it is, no doubt, who sums up in himself the most characteristic features of the nation; but from the psychological, as from the racial point of view, the unity of France is made up of the consensus of innumerable elements, in which the variety of the original factors survives.

Now, among so many factors, was there a decisive one?

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Did the unifying influence belong properly or particularly to a single race? If we consider the body, as it were, of the French nationality, its administrative and political oneness, there seems to be little doubt that the Latin influence had most to answer for in its growth. The Roman tradition implanted from the time of Cæsar, and for several centuries paramount, created the framework of a state in the land that was to be France; and after its momentary breakdown under the impact of the invasions, we see that framework reappearing and reasserting itself. Though the Franks were the agents, they were not the real architects, of the definitive construction of the political order of France. In the struggle against feudal anarchy, in the slow conquest of the realm for the king, the lawyers and councillors who eventually had their way were actuated by the ideal of the Roman state.

Again, historical research has apportioned their respective shares to the great institutions which, after the disruption of the middle ages, concurred to bring about that moulding of the people into a solid national whole. The unity of France, materially considered, may be said to have been the work of the monarchy, either through the tenacious purpose and statecraft of some sovereigns, or through the unfailing devotion and silent labor of their instruments, the lawyers. The administration of modern France grew to be a complex and in many respects an efficient organization; and everybody knows how, after the earthquake of the Revolution, the Latin genius and will of Napoleon recast the framework of the country in a rigid, centralized government, which has not yet been essentially modified.

There was a time when loyalty to the king was the root-idea of French patriotism. But what the monarchy did was principally to gather province after province, to create the

political and social unity of France. And what I am interested in is the soul of that unity. That soul is primarily moral and intellectual. How did it grow, out of so many conflicting races, so many different tempers? And is it possible to seize any of its elements?

From this point of view, religion was certainly one of the principal formative influences. The Church, like the monarchy, moulded the unity of France. And not only did the secular organization of the French Church make for authority and order, in its close alliance with the power of the king: at the same time, religion permeated men's sensibilities, and made them brothers in the spiritual sense. No one can measure the indebtedness of the French feeling of nationality to the properly religious forces. But we know that those very forces were responsible in the sixteenth century for a partial breakdown of the national unity; the wars of religion tore the country asunder, and the breach has never completely healed since. Besides, the Church, while retaining her vitality and prestige, has lost much of her sway over the modern mind; and in the Frenchness of the French, to-day, it is hardly possible to lay one's finger on a trait necessarily associated, for instance, with Catholicism.

Proceeding with our analysis, we next come across the love of the fatherland, a more efficient, or at any rate a more universal influence, in that inward domain which we are gradually reaching. The patriotism of the French was an early growth of their national life; long before the word was invented, the feeling lay at the core of their corporate unity. And of course, as is always the case, the love of country, hearth and home was strengthened by the trials it had to bear. Suffering beyond words hardened the fibre of the French national feeling, and made it unbreakable. Through the protracted agonies of a long historical past, down to the

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fierce crisis of the present, the vulnerable frontiers of France were the fields where her independence had to conquer or die. From the Hundred Years' War to the four years of the World War, the root of that feeling was ever bathed with blood. Indeed this feeling lies very near, or at, the centre of the moral influences we are trying to analyze; and we find that it is an essentially spiritual cause, being inseparably associated with sacrifice.

But patriotism, while it is a cause, might just as well be regarded as an effect. From the first it was itself suggested, encouraged, nourished, not only by the instinct of self-preservation or the gregarious tendency of the herd, nor by the attachment of the heart to the memory of one's forebears, but by something even more positive and all-pervading and more rich. If it grew through suffering and sacrifices, how were sacrifices made possible and accepted? So we revert to the question we were asking ourselves. When Frenchmen consented to suffer for the sake of one another, because they felt at one, and desired at all costs to remain so, being ready to lay down their lives in order to bequeath their children that precious unity, how is it that they felt thus at one? And what did their feeling exactly consist of?

The answer is that early enough in the historical development of France, a miracle happened—that miracle which takes place when the soul of a nation is born. The elements lay there, in the separate, diverse instincts, tendencies, moral and intellectual faculties, of all the races which had been intermixed for centuries. Those elements were gradually fused into a whole, a complex, organic and living whole, which possessed its own inner law of identity through change. A personality was thus created: the collective mind of a people. Endowed with a power of assimilation, it drew to itself the new materials that were successively

added to the national stock, and organized them with its own substance. How strong that attraction was at a relatively early time, we know from the destiny of the Scandinavian pirates who, having settled in Normandy, allowed themselves to be soaked through with the influence of France to such an extent that they were soon afterwards, with William the Conqueror, the bearers of French civilization to England. That moral personality of France, once created, went on defining and realizing itself with the strange force of self-assertion and permanence which such collective psychological beings seem to own. It looks indeed as if national types were predetermined, and answered to innate possibilities in the domain of human character; they enjoy, like a healthy individual, a wonderful quality of relative stability; and through their spontaneous straining after a clearer self-expression, or through their long, continuous working upon themselves, they may be said to be their own makers. Nature prepares the fuel for the mind of a nation; but once the vital spark has set it alight, it burns by a spiritual energy which seems independent of matter.

But this applies to all the peoples that have reached a state of fully developed nationhood. Without attempting to analyze the soul of France—a subject broad enough in itself!—is it possible to grasp anything of the peculiar way in which its constituent elements are fused together? In the process I have been describing, or in its result, was there anything specifically French?

I think there was, and this will yield us the secret of the unity of France.

Very far back in the middle ages, when the idea of France was still hovering as a vague, uncertain image on the horizon of consciousness, we note that the knowledge of her, and the feeling of her relation to each of her sons, were already suf-

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fused with a soft, intimate light, a naïve tenderness. "Douce France"—sweet France—is the song of Roland, such is the first childlike language of patriotism in our literature; the direct expression, by an individual mind, of its connection with a whole and of the character of that whole. This is the key-note which, once struck, has never been forgotten. The unity of France resides in a peculiar quality of her spiritual being; and that quality is a diffused gentleness of moral and intellectual life. The unity of France lies in her original culture, which, permeating all her children, is the very atmosphere in which they breathe, and constitutes a bond between them because it is equally indispensable to them all.

From the general conditions—both physical and human—in which the personality of France was evolved, from the many elements which entered into it, there grew a fine correspondence of the nation to the country, of the men and women in the nation to one another, and of the whole people to a particular ideal of life. The need of that ideal is now bred in the bone of all Frenchmen; they cannot do without it; and as the existence of the same instinctive craving in their fellow-countrymen is absolutely essential to the satisfaction of the common desire, the elusive likeness which one feels among the French is not a superficial trait, but a constitutive essence, which pervades their whole nature. They are before everything sociable creatures, belonging to a certain "milieu," adapted to it, and finding in it the impersonal basis of their characters, as well as the possibility of being fully themselves. Their unity is rooted in the deepest layers of their being; it is that very being.

A charm, a winning quality, which secretly steals into men's souls, melts away their most obdurate differences, captures the hearts, the senses and the minds, is the soft flame



which has fused together the tribes and the clans and the races into the unified solid texture of national France. Whence did that spell radiate? From the land, no doubt, first of all. The land is pleasant and inviting; it welcomes intercourse among men, and seems to call for it; it is an education in itself for the senses; it encourages the perception of the finer shades by its gentle transitions and constant variety. In the same province, the same district, you will find the North and the South side by side, as a valley opens to the cold blasts from distant Russia, or a hillside ripens under the summer sun. Thus the faculty of discrimination is sharpened, but on the other hand the main contrasts are softened, and their edge is blunted. There is a delicate suggestiveness in the harmonious, composed landscapes of France. A lesson emanates from them, and for centuries it has silently fashioned the deeper sensibilities of men. It is the more readily listened to, as it conveys itself through pleasure.

Pleasure, indeed, is an essential element of the fellowship of Frenchmen: they like to be together, because it stimulates their faculties, and creates a genial atmosphere of pleasurable intercourse. Now the same trait runs through all their national idiosyncrasies. The loveliness and, as it were, the easy habitableness of the country thus blend themselves with its wealth, its mellowness, the fertility of the soil, the rich juices and flavors of the fruits and wines. One might say, without being unduly paradoxical, that even the art of savory cooking embodies some of the less exalted aspirations of the common ideal of the French. The character of light sensuousness is stamped upon it; and austere moralists will sometimes find fault with it on that account.

But that sensuousness is closely intertwined with intellectual cravings; it shades off into spirituality. On the basis

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of an agreeable intercourse of free, sociable, critical, fastidious, intellectual human beings, the French have built up a civilization and a culture. The joy of life does not only radiate from the soil and the sky, and find opportunity as well as encouragement in the easy grouping of men with men: it reverberates through the minds and souls, and pitches the tone of social relations in a key of gentle, refined humanity. The manners, the language, the literature, the thought, the art of France, all show an intimate connection with that deep-rooted, instinctive ideal; they express it, bear witness to it, and at the same time foster it by making its effect cumulative on the successive generations. The critical gift of the French intelligence; its nice valuation of ideas; the logical faculty which is so discernible in its works; its quality of universality and clearness in construction; the part it has played in acting as a medium between European civilizations and doctrines; the suppleness and adaptability, the quick assimilation it has not ceased to display, have all been traced back, more or less, to that one main tendency: the desire to share with many other minds the pleasure of quick, spontaneous, and happy spiritual activities. Those who have once taken their share in that generous, disinterested selfishness, and have enjoyed their birthright in the commonwealth of life-loving, many-sided, critical, and yet indulgent citizens, are usually won by it forever. Our brothers the Alsations had tasted it, and that is why they could not relish German culture. Whether the logical genius of our Latin ancestors, or the Gallic fertility of wit and tongue, or the drop of Greek blood in the veins of every Frenchman has more to do with that mellow fruit of the centuries than the other influences is obviously a futile, hopeless problem. All the elements nature has mixed together probably contributed to that result.

But is the moral fibre sufficiently tough in that loyalty to one another, founded on a common preference for certain things, and the faculty of mutually satisfying it? The patriotism of the French has conclusively shown that it does not stop short of sacrifice. Men have died by the hundred thousand, by the million, for the country which was to them before all the sweet mother of the sweet intercourse of men and the golden hours of life. . . . The tree may be judged by its fruit. The culture of France has justified itself, because the young men whom it had cherished have known how to suffer. The ideal of somewhat detached and fastidious intellectual refinement, the ideal of the artist, the thinker and the critic, has been tested, and proved true. It possessed the saving virtue of sincerity. There was at the core of it, unperceived of many, a worship of stainless delicacy, a fearless facing of acknowledged facts, a stoical notion of honor and what is due to the nobler elements of one's being, which is akin to the mediæval spirit of chivalry, and has practically in this war equalled, if not surpassed, the heroism of the Knights. The miracle of France, a miracle every day renewed, is her playing with the fire of truth, and finding in it, instead of a corrosive, destructive influence, an invigorating source of courage and strength.

Thus we find that the unity of her people has a decidedly internal origin. It is in no way forced from the outside on an unwilling medley of groups or individuals; it is essentially opposed to the military discipline of the German state. It rises from the heart of each citizen, where it has struck root, having irresistibly won its way to it through the senses and through the mind. However ancient, or relatively modern, the connecting link between any of the provinces of France and the whole, that province is merged, with all the others, into an absolutely solid, indistinguishable mass. The French

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Revolution gave that union the crowning seal of democratic acceptance. Such a national bond is proof against everything but its own inner corruption, which would mean the hopeless decay of the vitality of France. It seems possible to believe, on the contrary, that the soul which makes her one is rising, in renewed youth and energy, from the dreadful ordeal of these years.

And it is through the very same ordeal that your unity, meanwhile, is crystallizing. Unique in its gigantic size, in the multiplicity of its elements, which makes it a complete representation of the Cosmos, in the rapidity of its political, economic, social evolution, the great Republic of the new world may perhaps receive not an encouragement—it needs none—but a confirmation of its surging faith in the future, from the distant analogy of France. However various the human materials which are being fused here into a whole, the sure path of unity is open to a nation which is developing in accord with the will of nature, and finding in itself the root-idea of its oneness. Nature has carved out its cradle in the vast breadth of a continent, and the varieties and contrasts it includes only make the promise of its growth fuller and richer. No rival civilization placed too near threatens to check its organic development, and it already constitutes the centre of attraction in one half of the world. But the safest token of its destiny lies in its soul. Suffering resolutely faced had, once before, secured its integrity against disruptive tendencies; the drama of the Civil War meant the conquest, through sacrifice, of a coherent frame to a maturing national personality. The influx of immigrants, in huge numbers, having created another and a more complex problem, the spiritual energies latent in the young giant have triumphed over it through a supreme effort of self-assertion. The admirable ethical victory of the American intervention

in the World War is clenching the question of American unity. In an age of unbounded material progress, but of life-threatening moral crisis, it is the supremacy of your will which fashions the unbreakable bond of a hundred million citizens; as at the slow dawning of European culture, in an age of semi-barbarism, the gentle spirit of France united her sons through a common humanity of instincts. Your unity will be born—it is being born—of the tremendous creative energy of your national idealism; of the clearer consciousness of your deepest purposes, realized through devotion to a disinterested duty; and at the core of that consciousness, it is the moral conscience that one finds. The infallible feeling of right and wrong, rooted in the inmost being of all Americans, has not only saved the world, but set its definitive stamp on the character of a civilization in which the best hope of the world resides.

L. CAZAMIAN.